Occurrence of blue tile fish *Malacanthus latovittatus* (Lacepede, 1801) (Actinopterygii: Malacanthidae) in Tuticorin Coast

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A specimen of *Malacanthus latovittatus* (Fig. 1) with standard length 330 mm and weighing 250 g was collected from the bycatch of a commercial trawler at Tuticorin fishing harbour during March 2010. The specimen was caught approximately 30 km east off Tuticorin, Gulf of Mannar at a depth ranging from 20 to 25 m. After detailed morphological examination, the specimen was photographed and fixed with 5% formalin. The morphometric measurements were taken to the nearest mm and the specimen was identified as *M. latovittatus* described in FAO (1984).

![Fig. 1. Malacanthus latovittatus (Lacepede, 1801)](image)

The family Malacanthidae has 5 genera and about 46 species distributed in tropical and temperate seas. The genus *Malacanthus* comprises of three valid species, *M. brevirostris* Guichenot, 1848, *M. latovittatus* (Lacepede, 1801) and *M. plumieri* (Bloch, 1786). *M. latovittatus* has elongated and compressed body, dorsal and ventral profile evenly tapering to caudal, mouth broad with fleshy lips, jaws equal, termination of upper jaw far distant from eye. Cycloid scales on opercles and nape, square on superior part of trunk. Operculum is with a strong flat spine and five branchiostegals. Teeth in jaws are canine; vomer and palatines toothless.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphometric characters</th>
<th>Measurements (mm)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total length</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard length</td>
<td>330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head length</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body depth</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snout length</td>
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<td>Post orbital length</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower jaw length</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper jaw length</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Dorsal fin base length</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Preanal length</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anal fin base length</td>
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